

## A PITIFUL TALE.

## GENERAL JAMES WEIR'S FAMILY.

How an Emigrant Legislator and Statesman of Ohio Brought His Wife and Children to Degradation—His Death at the Hands of His Son.

The Cincinnati Enquirer, October 31, gives an account of the Weir family, of Belmont County, Ohio, to which public attention has lately been drawn by a family tragedy. General James Weir, the victim, began life in destitution and ignorance and ended it in squalor and neglect. In the interim, however, he educated himself as a lawyer, attained eminence at the bar, and served his State in public office. During this period he received the title of General. In 1827, 1829, and 1830 he was elected to the Ohio Legislature as a Whig. He was married twice, but soon repented of the second union and endeavored to obtain a divorce, himself writing the petition to the court. It was refused, however, and the couple resumed the conjugal relationship. Mrs. Weir died in 1838, leaving seven children, eight children, and a son of whom died of consumption. The remaining three are George, James, and Ada. The account ends abruptly: "It would have been better for all concerned if consumption could have taken these two boys also, as subsequent events have proved."

"A BELL ON EARTH." James Weir, Jr., grew to be a man of fine personal appearance, but of a violent temper. He became a person who wanted to rule or ruin. When he was a boy he knocked a young man's eye out in St. Clairsville with a hammer. This was over a game of cards at his father's office. The injured man's name was Joseph Ryan. Upon another occasion James struck a man named Littlejohn over the head with a brick, and then, after a quarrel, he was arrested and committed to jail. Young James secured employment as a letter-carrier in Cincinnati. While here he cut a man nearly off in an encounter, for which he was tried, but he was acquitted. He also fired a

bullet at another man. He was employed by the Cincinnati post-office for some time, but was never arrested, the affair being compromised. He returned to the paternal roof in 1837, ostensibly to look after his father's estate. For years previous General Weir had led a secluded life, following no business and living as best he could upon money borrowed upon mortgages. When the family were all at home, meals were ever set down but there was a quarrel. Friends visiting the house, and the home was turned into a hell upon earth. The elder brother had no intention of leaving the house, but he was opposed by his father, who was determined to have the influence gained by James over the old man, who by this time was becoming childish from old age. Frequently James would strike his aged father to compel him to accede to his demands. He was not a violent man, but he was a violent man, and although George witnessed these assaults, he feared to interfere in behalf of his father.

During the summer that the yellow fever raged so violently in the South, George, a boy only seventeen or eighteen years of age, left his home, and, in company with another wild youth, started on a tramp. The two had but five cents between them. They found their way to Memphis, but, although they remained there several weeks in the midst of the terrible fever then raging, they were not affected by the dreadful disease. At the end of two months George returned home from his tramp, and shortly afterward a violent and well-planned fatal encounter occurred between the two brothers. James brought home a mortgage deed one day, and tried to force the old man to sign it. Knowing that if the General were to sign the instrument it would transfer all the property to James, George interposed a strong objection. At this James, who was in a violent mood, with many curses, exclaimed: "You young scoundrel, you have crossed my path now, and I am going to kill you. I'll fix you so you can't interfere with my plans any more."

As soon as he could escape from the grasp of his brother he so strongly feared from the house. James pursued him and fired a revolver. It is not known whether the shot hit his brother or fired in the air merely to frighten him. George went away, and, procuring a double-barreled shotgun, returned to his home, where he called upon his brother to come out and fight. A duel James would not come out, and George kept him in the house nearly all day, each looking for a chance to shoot the other, but neither being willing to face his brother. At last, however, of their own free will, and the old man slept with a revolver under his pillow. Such violent scenes as the above were of frequent occurrence in the Weir family. The old man, James Weir, was forced to bear and witness them. There was no mother in the house to whom the child could fly for protection and assurance. Piece by piece the furniture was sold, and the fine library accumulated by the old man went the same way. Everything was mortgaged and even the place became more and more squalid and miserable. Yet this was only the beginning of the real troubles of the family.

A MURDER. St. Clairsville became infested by a gang of outlaws, who were the terror of Belmont County. Robberies were committed and property burned. George Weir was suspected of belonging to the mob who were responsible for these depredations. Although young in years George weired the reputation of being an exceedingly daring and daring character. Many a crime was laid at his door, but he succeeded in evading punishment through the influence he was able to command. At length the people became so enraged against him that no one could be found with the courage to investigate his prosecution. George became very haughty with the pistol, and his violent passion made him all the more to be feared. One day in 1870 he fired two shots at a man named McIntyre on the public streets of St. Clairsville for some trifling cause, but no attention was paid to this. In May, 1880, the house of Martin Pink was burglarized, on which occasion George Weir and his brother were arrested. Rigs turned State's evidence and the prisoners were indicted for burglary and larceny. The case went to trial, but Weir got a continuance. On Christmas Day, 1880, George Weir, never missing with liquor, and meeting Sterling Rigs in front of the mayor's office in St. Clairsville shot him three times with a thirty-caliber Smith & Wesson revolver, killing him almost instantly. After a chase and a desperate struggle young Weir was nearly killed himself, captured and lodged in jail. Thus the son of the once proud and influential lawyer became a murderer. Although his brother was arrested and imprisoned for a capital offense, James Weir, Jr., never went near him, nor did he send a word of sympathy or consolation to him. George was tried, but the jury disagreed and he still sits in jail awaiting a new trial. The old General did all he could to defend his son George, and firmly believed that the killing of Rigs was justifiable.

THE CROWNING TRAGEDY. The next tragedy in the Weir family was enacted on Saturday, October 23. Ada Weir, the old General's daughter, a beautiful girl, barely twenty years of age, has a wealth of dark brown hair, lovely blue eyes, a complexion that might be envied by any woman on earth, and a form that is just budding into a charming womanhood. She was the most beautiful of the most beautiful artist in a class of models. This young girl is innocent, intelligent, bright and intelligent, full of grace and exquisite refinement. She has been decorated by the press of England and the United States. Mr. James Grant Wilson brings the number worthy to a close with a long and delightful historic-memoir article upon the old-time "Academy of the Arts." The number is a whole as a more distinctly literary flavor than some of its predecessors, but is by no means the less thereby. A. B. Barnes & Co., publishers, New York.

Potter's Monthly for December will be an unusually strong and interesting number, the publishers announcing among the leading articles to appear one descriptive of the "Old North Church," Boston, illustrated by sketches by the artist, Mayor Brothers. Also a well-written and timely paper entitled "The State and the Railway," by Professor James Clement Ambrose, in which the writer thoroughly reviews the question of railway legislation and State control of corporations. None the less interesting will be Paper III, of "Experiences with Modern Spiritualism," in which the writer illustrates his graphic details of an investigation into the mysteries of spiritualism. An excellent biographical sketch of the late Dr. Holland, editor of The Century Magazine, will be given by an excellent pen of the pen of one of America's most talented and best-known writers. For sale by all news-dealers.

Students of decorative art will find The Art Amateur for November full of charming illustrations of quaint Chippendale, "pilgrims" and "colonial" decorated with cupids, exquisite rock crystal vase, bric-a-brac from the double sale, ornamental vases, and rare ecclesiastical embroideries.

On the evening of the tragedy Jim told his father to go with him into the parlor, as he desired to discuss some business with him. The General got up, and, with the aid of his cane, hobbled to the parlor door. There his son read the following to his father and asked him to sign it: "I agree to let Ada marry whom she pleases."

The General shook his head and started to back out of the parlor door into the hall. James seized him by the coat and pulled him into the parlor. It was in evidence at the corner's inquest that

The frontpiece is a deck plaque drawn by Cassell Pilon, and there are clever sketches by Edwards and Pilon. The eight-page supplement gives a notable array of designs for plaques and panels before mentioned, and left no other work of the artist. The text includes valuable "Cautions to Print Collectors" and "Hints to China Painters." Besides articles on church needle-work, altar decorations, and wall-painting, the supplement contains many other art topics. Price, 84 cents; thirty-five cents a number. Montgomery Market, publisher, 23 Union Square, New York.

THE LATE DEAN STANLEY. The late Dean Stanley was not very acute either of taste or smell, so that all he was much the same to him if it was only tender. Thomas Hughes first met the Dean when he was at a breakfast table, where he and six others were plentifully regaled. Mr. Hughes gives many pleasant glimpses of Arthur Stanley, as he liked to be called, in the November Harper. A full-page portrait of the late Dean will adorn the same number.

"The Hero of Cowpens" is a centennial sketch of great interest, giving clear and most interesting views of the lives of General Daniel Morgan and the arch-traitor Benedict Arnold. It is written by a Baltimorean who chooses to be unknown, but who gives a most readable and reasonable book. Published by A. B. Barnes & Co.

THE BLOODY SHIRT. It will be impossible for the Northern Democratic press and its deputy assistants to call the dastardly shooting of negroes in Mississippi "another bogus bloody-shirt outrage," because the news of it comes through Democratic sources. Were this not the case the charge would be quickly made that the Northern Republicans had started their "outrage mill" again. The shooting is entirely in accordance with Bourbon precedent in Mississippi. It has been their custom there for years to shoot a negro before he is hanged, and, then, make a great show of arms about the polls on election day, and have reports industriously circulated among the negroes that if they attempt to vote they will be shot. The natural effect of this is to frighten the negroes from the polls, and the vote of the "first families" is thereby swayed and less false counting is necessary when the polls are closed.—New York Tribune.

THE ART OF SPEECH. STUDIES IN ELOQUENCE AND LOGIC. By L. T. TOWNSEND, D. D., Professor in Boston University and Dean of the Faculty of Arts. The book is a collection of the best of the art of speaking, and is a most valuable work. It is published by A. B. Barnes & Co., Washington, D. C.

YOUNG FOLKS' HISTORY OF THE WAR FOR THE UNION. By JOHN D. CHAMPLIN, JR., New York: Holt & Co., Washington: James J. Chapman.

THE AUTHOR OF THIS WORK HAS SUCCEEDED in performing a most difficult task, viz: that of writing a history of the great epoch in our national history which will be read with interest by the young. In the presentation and arrangement of his facts he has followed the chronological order, and given plain and clear accounts of the most striking events of the war, enriched by sketches of the prominent men engaged in that great struggle. He has interspersed his historic account by incidents and anecdotes, and has not done so without good reason. The language employed is simple, and is adapted to the understanding of the young, and where technical words and expressions are unavoidably used they are fully explained. The book is profusely illustrated, which gives it an additional value. The young reader will find this history could be circulated largely in the South it would do much toward eradicating the impressions which the young of that section have acquired by the personal and party spirit which has been the result of the war. The book is a most valuable work, and is a most interesting one. It is published by A. B. Barnes & Co., Washington, D. C.

LEAVES OF GRASS. By WALT WHITMAN. Boston: From the complete poetical works of Walt Whitman, just published by Osgood & Co., of Boston, under the title of "Leaves of Grass," the following shows that the vigor of expression and boldness of thought which have brought attention to the Good Gray Poet still remains. WHAT SEEM I SEE IN THEE. (To U. G. returned from his World's Tour.) Is not that where thou'rt now?—distant history's great highways. Unfathomable by time's shoots warlike victor's daisies. Or that thou'rt now?—Washington, art ruling the land in peace. Or that thou'rt now?—Europe's fated, venerable Asia's war's upon. Who walk'd with king and with even past the round But that in foreign lands in all the walks with kings. Those prairie sovereigns of the West, Kansas, Ohio's, Indiana's, comrades, farmers, soldiers, all to the front. Involuntarily walking with kings with even pass the round world's promenade. Were all so justified. This, to our own little Potomac, will appeal to the sympathies of all Washingtonians: BY BROAD POTOMAC'S SHORE. By broad Potomac's shore, again old tongue, (Still abraded, still gleaming, can never cease this battle.) Again old heart no say, again to you, same, the old flash spring returning. Again the friends and foes, again Virginia's summer sky, pellucid blue and silver. Again the forenoon purple of the hills. Again the daisies, soft and green, and green. Again the blood red roses blooming.

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